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PREFACE

[p. v]

THAT Chief of California Indians who told Dr. Benedict of the power of his people in the old days when they had eaten 'the health of the desert' made a profoundly interesting observation.

> In the beginning, he said, God gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from that cup they drank their life. . . . They all dipped in the water but their cups were different. Our cup is broken now. . . .[1]

The African peoples also have had their cups of clay or wood, or their gourd dippers. They have worked out their intricate and appropriate adaptations to their particular environments, a social structure well suited to their needs, and a remarkably successful system of education.

Now that Africa has come under Western influences, however, the environment has changed. In many cases the changes have been so rapid that the Africans by their own unaided efforts, and within the pattern of their cultures, are no longer able to make the necessary adaptations. The results in social disintegration are well described by the Umbundu proverb:

> Where the pot breaks, there also the potsherds remain.[2]

The broken pot no longer has either utility or beauty—is no more a pot, but only broken and scattered sherds. So it is also with a broken social group—only scattered individuals remain. This proverb refers primarily to a broken family, but thoughtful Ovimbundu are now applying it to their whole social structure.

Since the life of Africa has been thrust thus suddenly into the world's life, 'it becomes a problem of urgent importance, how, while introducing the European system . . . to conserve the very real values of the indigenous African system'.[3] The solution of this problem is a responsibility of Christian missions inasmuch as theirs is the responsibility for the greater part of the education of the Africans.

The Ovimbundu,[4] the people chosen for the present study, are

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, p. 21 f. (Boston and N.Y.: Houghton Mifflin, 1934).

[2] *Pa fila ombia, haipo oviye pa viala.*

[3] E. W. Smith, *Essays presented to C. G. Seligman*, p. 334, quoted in the *Year Book of Education, 1938*, p. 697 (London: Evans).

[4] *For explanation of terms see note on Orthography, p. xi.*

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a Bantu-speaking group numbering about one and one third million, whose home is the Benguela Highland of Angola (Portuguese West Africa). Christian missions have worked among them since 1881, the date of founding of the W.C.A.M. of the A.B.C.F.M., with which work the writer has been connected since 1924.

Umbundu mentality. It is not the purpose of this study to appraise Bantu or Umbundu mentality. Every new description of a Bantu culture gives a new angle or vantage point from which to view the versatile mentality of that interesting group of people. All available objective views unite to show us, as Driberg holds for primitive man in general, 'a being as human as ourselves, affected by the same emotions . . . with thoughts, responses, and actions differing in no essential way from our own'[1]—neither the noble savage of Rousseau nor the subhuman creature of more recent doctrinaires. 'The grouping of savages with children and idiots is but another symptom of an attitude which, when faced with a different type of culture, insists on assuming a lower type of mentality to account for that culture.'[1]

It must be owned that different views of primitive mentality are held, but it would seem that those which hold primitive man to be incapable of reasoning logically, his mentality in some way inferior or 'pre-logical', base their conclusions too largely on theoretical or library material and too little on results of actual field work.[2] It is not the purpose of the present study to examine these theories, but a word of protest must be raised against some who, basing their view of the mentality of Bantu peoples on some such theories as those mentioned above, and with or without sup-

[1] J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is*, pp. 2, 3 (London: Routledge, 1929).

[2] Cf., for example, L. Levy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures*, *La Mentalité Primitive*, &c. The seriousness with which these and similar theoretical studies have been taken is surprising. Cf. e.g., R. Allier, *Mind of the Savage* (London: Bell, 1929); J. W. C. Dougall, *Characteristics of African Thought* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1932); N. S. Booth, *Teaching a Bantu Community* (MS. copy). Dr. Max Gluckman of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute told me that I had wrongly interpreted Levy-Bruhl, and he kindly loaned me a copy of a paper by Evans-Pritchard which sets forth a different interpretation of Levy-Bruhl's thesis with regard to the 'pre-logical' mentality. It is not my intention here to combat the thesis of the 'pre-logical' mentality, but rather a common interpretation of it (Evans-Pritchard, 'Levy-Bruhl's Theory of Primitive Mentality', *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the Egyptian University*, vol. i, pt. ii).

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port from intelligence tests of doubtful suitability, have called in question the 'educability' of some Bantu groups.[1]

I shall not examine these theories but rather leave to descriptions of Umbundu culture given in the main part of the study, the task of showing that the mental capacity of the Ovimbundu is sufficient to enable them to assimilate the education placed at their disposal. Educators who really believe otherwise would hardly waste their time in attempting to educate a people who, after all, may be incapable of education.

> If we do not believe in the logic of the savage and in the identity of his processes of thought with our own, then we should be proved illogical ourselves in attempting to develop along logical lines peoples of an alien mentality, and in attempting to transmit our civilization to peoples mentally incapable of assimilating it.[2]

The capacity of the Ovimbundu and their 'educability' are assumed.

The Approach. All the various types of approach to African education have been classed under one of the two aims: Assimilation, which has represented Latin colonial policy; and Adaptation, which has been more representative of the British and Belgian point of view. *Assimilation* would make African Frenchmen, African Portuguese, &c., of the natives. *Adaptation* would take what is best in both the African and the European cultures in order to produce a better African civilization'.[3]

Within the aim of *assimilation* there may be distinguished at least two policies. One ignores indigenous culture, presents the European culture quite without reference to it, and treats the African as though he had no cultural background—as though he were a *tabula rasa*. The other may study the indigenous culture, but only in order to be able to uproot it the more thoroughly and efficiently.

Within the aim of *adaptation* at least three distinct policies may

[1] See discussion in Malherbe (ed.), *Educational Adaptation*, Chap. XVIII (*N.E.F. Conference Report*, Cape Town, 1937); also P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town, 1934).

[2] Driberg, op. cit., p. 4.

[3] There is an interesting discussion of these two policies by H. Dubois, 'Assimilation ou Adaptation?' in *Africa*, 1929, pp. 1 ff. See also the discussion in the Preface of *Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa*, by I. Schapera (London, 1934). There are other policies for dealing with the Africans such as repression, exploitation, &c., but since they cannot be classed as educational theories I have not included them in this analysis.

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121 177 be recognized. *First*, there is a sympathetic but entirely unsystematic use of the culture in question which collects folk-lore, customs, or other single items to use them as illustrations, as lesson or sermon material, &c., but without reference to their context in the fabric or pattern of the culture. *Second*, there is an attempt to rebuild those functions or institutions which *a priori* are judged essential and to leave untouched those judged unessential. Still, whatever is done, is done without reference to the pattern of the culture in question and the criteria are predetermined. *The third method* is that advocated by the present study. It begins with a systematic study of the culture in question, especially its characteristic patterns of behaviour, significant attitudes, beliefs and customs; and the effect of its contact with other cultures; in order

To determine and describe the content;

To analyse and evaluate this content with reference to its bearing upon present local needs; and

To make suggestions for tentative procedures which shall build upon indigenous patterns of behaviour, make adjustment to approved attitudes from the outside as easy as possible, and work toward a continuous and self-functioning process of self-adjustment.

The view-point assumed is a composite of practical anthropology, progressive education, and the newer approach to Christian missions. The criteria have been evolved in part through a study of the local situation and its needs.

127 *Sources.* More documentary material has been sifted than the references indicate. The historical account which has finally been incorporated as Chapter XII was written before the main part of this study and served as an important part of its background.

128 129 The chief sources, however, are original materials descriptive of certain phases of Umbundu life and culture—materials gathered on the field over a period of years, especially between 1933 and 1938. Much of it consists of traditional 'literature' (folk-tales, proverbs, riddles and songs). More of it, however, consists of descriptions of customs, beliefs, institutions and other culture traits secured from personal observation, from descriptions by natives, from schedules collected and written up by trained natives, and Umbundu autobiographical data. Much of this is given in direct translation, certain parts in summary or by reference, while the rest has served as background.

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Limits of time and space have made it necessary to restrict the study to the two major fields of social structure and education. These two phases were chosen because description of them seems to be pre-requisite to treatment of other areas of the culture, and also because of their inherent importance both anthropologically and educationally. In order to provide background and make for better understanding, an introductory chapter on 'Habitat' has been provided. I hope to illustrate the remaining phases of the culture at a later date.

It is not possible adequately to thank, nor even to mention by name, all those for whose help I am indebted. It would never have been possible to organize this study had it not been for a generous provision of fellowships and of many facilities by Union Theological Seminary in New York City, and also for the necessary allowance of time during two furloughs by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. For extraordinary facilities put at my disposal, I am grateful to the Missionary Research Library and to its Director, Mr. C. H. Fahs. Among my many teachers at Union Seminary, Teachers' College, and in the Anthropology Department of Columbia University, for whose help I am indebted, I must name Professors I. L. Kandel, D. J. Fleming, A. L. Swift, Jun., Gene Weltfish, George Herzog, and Ralph Linton, who have freely given me much advice, counsel, and encouragement. For an especially high order of help I am very deeply indebted to Dr. Ruth Fulton Benedict and to Professor Harrison S. Elliott. Dr. Benedict not only gave freely of her time and wisdom as teacher and counsellor, but she also gave much encouragement and assistance in the task of arranging publication. For help with the German source material, I am indebted to my wife. To those whom I have named, and to many others, go my sincere thanks.

G. M. C.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
NEW YORK CITY
May 1939

THE manuscript was revised in Africa in 1940 and the typing, done by J. C. Lazaro, African secretary of Currie Institute (Dondi), was completed in March 1941. It is now nearly six years later that the opportunity for publication has finally been realized. It is not

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PART ONE [p.17]

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

121 *The object of Part One is (1) to describe the present social structure of the Ovimbundu, and (2) to suggest significant elements that this social structure has or may have for the programme of Christian mission among this people.*

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

127 HAD my historical survey revealed a detailed description of
122 Umbundu social structure made at some former time, it would also be useful to make comparisons with the present state of affairs. Since there is no such witness out of the past, it is only possible to describe and analyse that which at present exists. For this purpose some excerpts from Umbundu narratives are presented and references made to certain folk-tales and proverbs. The basis of the analysis and description rests more especially, however, upon notes and impressions gathered in field-work over a period of years and upon a considerable number of genealogical tables and schedules of marriage arrangements.[1] These latter are referred to here only to a certain extent. I hope to treat these more fully later. The subject of marriage properly belongs to the field of social structure, but because of its importance I hope to devote a chapter to it. Only certain of the genealogical tables are presented fully and in their several aspects, while the others have served as basis and background for the whole of this part of the study.

565 The most significant historical allusion to the social structure
175 of the Ovimbundu which I have found was an observation of Pinheiro de Lacerda about 1790. "These are they of the Highlands who are made up of two "systems" the one call themselves
[264] "Quimbundos" (i.e. Ovimbundu), (these do not eat human flesh): the others are called "Quimbangalas" (i.e. the royal households of
[782] Imbangala stock), who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, at which all together attend, then all eat the "Makongo".[2]

[1] I have 150 of the former and 75 of the latter.
[2] *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 3a Ser., p. 488.

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175 565 Evidently royal persons could then be easily distinguished from the commoners.

565 178 The question naturally arises how far may a similar distinction be observed at the present time. The genealogical tables presented may answer the question. It may be seen that intermarriage of commoners and royalty has proceeded to such a degree that the differences have been greatly dimmed, if not quite erased. Furthermore, the loss of the political power which the royal families formerly held has levelled down distinctions until they have largely lost their meaning. This loss again has hastened the process of intermarriage with commoners. While there are some distinctive practices which persist, they may now pertain to or be practised by certain members of a family only, or in some instances, and not in others. These refer especially to inheritance and to the naming of children.

121 By 'social structure' is meant the more or less permanent framework of relationships between members of a community which manifests itself in an ordered group-life, with reciprocal rights and duties, privileges and obligations, of members, determining behaviour-patterns . . . and moulding the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of members according to these patterns, so that it is only in and through them that the individual can achieve his personal self-realization and participate in the satisfactions offered by the life of his community.

This framework of social organization, or social structure, is permanent compared with the stream of human lives that, in the succession of the generations, flows through it. Each new generation finds it there, as an inheritance from untold generations of his predecessors. Yet the framework of social structure is not absolutely rigid or fixed for all time, but is itself a thing of growth, capable of variation in detail, sometimes giving birth to new developments, at other times undergoing disintegration and decay.[1]

101 [601] The genealogical tables which I have collected are fairly representative of the major divisions or 'tribes' of the Ovimbundu. The only 'tribes' not represented are those of the border regions of Namba, Sanga, Cikomba, and Kalukembe, none of which save the last are numerically important. These border groups themselves offer an interesting field of study and particularly in that they may provide cultural and linguistic bridges between the Ovimbundu and their neighbors.

[1] A. W. Hoernlé in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 67 f.

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PART TWO

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

121 *The purpose of Part Two is* (1) *to describe the life-cycle or development of the individual Ocimbundu from birth until adulthood,* (2) *to analyse the Umbundu educational process, and* (3) *to indicate and evaluate elements in this process that are or may be significant for the educational work of Christian missions among the Ocimbundu.*

Chapters V, VI, and VII describe the Umbundu life-cycle and consist largely of Umbundu narrative given in direct translation. The principal source is a composite manuscript compiled for classroom use from the contributions of a number of Ocimbundu.[1] *Comments and other Umbundu material are interpolated from time to time into this principal source.*

In Chapter VIII there is an analysis of Umbundu development. The evaluations are in Chapters IX, X, and XI.

CHAPTER V

THE UMBUNDU BABY

Birth

844 WHEN birth occurs in the house, it is supposed to take place on the grinding-stone (*olumbambo*). That this was so is indicated by the [539] folk-tales and proverbs which refer to the place of birth as *polumbambo*, or *kevye liokw cita* (on the stone of giving birth).[2] In this case, and especially if a woman is giving birth for the first time, she may be assisted by older women of the village. These, in the case of widows, may be relatives of the husband, or in the case of wives of householders, they will be his relatives by marriage. A woman's own mother may assist, but when she lives in a different village she is unlikely to attend. It would not be proper for the

[1] This source is given in quotation but without further reference. The chief contributors were R. Kavita Evambi, of Ciyuka; Alteko Ngulu and A. Siku Nunda, both of Bailundu; R. Kalupeseka of Ngalangi; I. Kayalo of Viye; Ndondi students of the normal classes and several women there. It was compiled and edited (in Umbundu) by Pedro Paulo of the Currie Institute staff.

[2] Cf. the 'birth-stool' of the Hebrews (or Egyptians), *vide* Exod. i. 16.

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CHAPTER VIII

ANALYSIS OF UMBUNDU DEVELOPMENT

THE question as to whether there is a Native African education is discussed by Mr. H. S. Scott in the *Year Book of Education 1938*.[1] He notes that anthropologists have insufficiently described the educational processes of the various African peoples and that educationists have been at fault in disregarding indigenous methods. It is to be hoped that the foregoing description of individual development has shown clearly that there is an Umbundu education, the function of which is the integration of the individual in the on-going process of society—the 'moulding of individuals to the social norm'.[2]

In order better to understand this process and to determine in what way it may be adapted to meet present needs, it is now necessary to analyse Umbundu educational concepts and methods.

The theory of personality upon which the Ovimbundu act does not seem to be entirely consistent. First, they act as though they believed that the child is born quite without character and that desirable traits have to be consciously formed. 'Children are generally ignorant until they have been taught by their relatives with whom they live.'[3] On this premiss, they proceed to instil psychological attitudes in the young child and to teach him social usages. With the social psychologist they seem to 'regard childhood . . . as an opportunity which must be used in *learning* useful behaviour through social contact'.[4] It is abundantly evident that they regard education as clearly a *social* process.

A baby is born pink and it is only when he turns dark at the sixth or eighth day that he shows the first indication of becoming a person (*omuna*). He shows further promise in that direction with his first show of sense, but all through childhood he is, in a

[1] *The Year Book of Education 1938* (Univ. of London, Inst. of Education, London: Evans Bros.), part II, pp. 639 ff.

[2] A. W. Hoernlé, 'An Outline of the Native Conception of Education in Africa', *Africa*, 1931, p. 147. This is quite close to Dewey's conception of education as 'transmission through communication'; cf. *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), chap. i.

[3] *Supra*, p. 100.

[4] F. H. Allport, *Social Psychology* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1924), p. 82.

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CHAPTER IX

EDUCATIONAL EVALUATIONS

121 THE conception of African education underlying the present study is frankly one of adaptation of all that is suitable from indigenous culture in order to weave it into the fabric of a new African civilization. This point of view, stated in the Preface and already elaborated with reference to the social structure in Part One, needs no detailed re-statement here.

661 Umbundu education, as described and analysed in the foregoing chapters, obviously has points of contact with a progressive conception of Christian education. If nothing else, at least the degree of success which it achieves should cause us to search out its secret. It is probable that there is no formal system of education which could show as great a percentage of success as can this primitive system. In terms of artistic or scientific achievement or discovery its results may not bulk very large, but in terms of successful adaptation to environment they are remarkable.[1] In terms of personal and social integration achieved the results are yet greater.[2] The success achieved by Umbundu education requires the attention of the educationist seeking to serve this people.

080 Among those elements of Umbundu education which may be built upon by missionary education, I wish to consider three: (1) The Umbundu conception of character, (2) Educational method as actual participation in real life situations, and (3) Educational 'content' as life itself—all of life.

Character

The significance of what the Ovimbundu estimate to be desirable character is evident, and no one would dispute the importance of perpetuating and generalizing the more desirable types of behaviour analysed. Only by grafting into these behaviour patterns, which the Ovimbundu recognize and understand, can

[1] This subject cannot be given adequate treatment in a chapter on education. Cf. J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is* (London: Routledge, 1929), chaps. ii, iii.

[2] As with many primitive peoples, delinquents and misfits are relatively rare. In Umbundu society allowance for dissent is usually large.

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[p. iii]

ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF AFRICA

FOREWORD

The preparation of a comprehensive survey of the tribal societies of Africa was discussed by the Executive Council of the Institute as far back as 1937, but the interruption and restricting of its activities caused by the war resulted in the postponement of the project. Events and developments during recent years, however, have led to a wider recognition of the need for collating and making more generally available the wealth of existing but uncoordinated material on the ethnic groupings and social conditions of African peoples, particularly in connection with plans for economic and social development. Moreover, it appeared that the International African Institute, as an international body which has received support from and performed services for the different Colonial governments, was in a very favourable situation for undertaking such a task.

The Institute, therefore, in 1944, applied to the recently established British Colonial Social Science Research Council for a grant from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund to finance the preparation of an Ethnographic Survey of Africa, and a grant was allocated for a period of five years from 1945, and was subsequently extended for a further period of three years. A committee, under the Chairmanship of Professor Radcliffe-Brown, was appointed to consider the scope and form of the survey, and collaboration was established with research institutions in South Africa, Rhodesia, East Africa, French West Africa, Belgium and the Belgian Congo.

The aim of the Ethnographic Survey is to present a concise, critical, and accurate account of our present knowledge of the tribal groupings, distribution, physical environment, social conditions, political and economic structure, religious beliefs and cult practices, technology and art of the African peoples. The material is presented as briefly and as consistent a plan as possible, and the texts are supplemented by maps and comprehensive bibliographies.

The Ethnographic Survey is being published as a series of separate, self-contained studies, each devoted to one particular people or cluster of peoples. It is hoped that publication in this form will make the results more quickly and readily available to those interested in specific areas or groups. A list of the sections which have already appeared is given on the cover of this volume.

Since the unequal value and the generally unsystematic nature of the available information constituted a chief reason for undertaking this survey, it will be obvious that the material here presented can make no claim to be complete or definitive. Every effort has been made, however, to scrutinize all available literature and to check it by reference to unpublished sources and to workers actually in the field; thus it is intended to present a clear picture of our existing knowledge and to point out the directions in which the need for further studies is most pressing. Any assistance from those who are in a position to remedy deficiencies and correct inaccuracies by providing supplementary material will be

3: Hambly E-6 (1929-1330) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

I. INTRODUCTION

Research work among the Ovimbundu of Angola indicates the presence of numerous cultural traits revealing what are probably distinct stratifications of culture. These diverse elements have been welded together into a pattern, the examination of which constitutes the present problem. 121

The object of this study is an analysis of these traits with a view to showing the sequence in which they have been received, from whence they came, and the processes which have been responsible for coordinating them so as to form the present social system.

My presentation passes from geographical and historical considerations to an ethnological approach, locally applied in the first place for complete analysis of the culture of the Ovimbundu and surrounding peoples. The traits have to be considered singly and in combination. Then follows an examination of some of these traits which are widely distributed outside Angola. We next seek to ascertain the geographical origin of traits, their history, and the psychology of their combinations and assimilation into an aggregate. What elements have been acquired through adoption? And what has been the historical process? Which traits have arisen through independent invention? What factors have been discarded, and why? To what extent have the Ovimbundu utilized opportunities for enriching their culture, and what possibilities have been neglected?

What are the classes of evidence which might be expected to assist an inquiry into the growth of Umbundu culture?

Field work was of primary importance for obtaining a first hand knowledge of the tribal life of the Ovimbundu as it exists today, and in order to estimate the effects of cultural contacts extensive journeys were made to the north, east, and south of the central territory occupied by the Ovimbundu. The results of personal investigation are given in chapters IV–IX, dealing with the economic, social, and religious life of the Ovimbundu. These facts have been kept free from the observations of other investigators whose reports are summarized in chapter III, "Historical Sources."

Unfortunately there are no archaeological data which can assist a study of historical processes, for archaeology has not yet been approached in Angola. 122

121 Geographical study is valuable in showing that physical factors such as position, topography, soil, and climate have had not only a permissive but a stimulating effect on the development of certain cultural traits.

127 Historical documents dating from the year A.D. 1500 present valuable evidence for tribal movements, the effect of early European contacts, and the existence of certain beliefs and ceremonies. The facts adduced in chapter III are used in chapters X–XII in discussing culture contacts and cultural processes.

197 Inquiry respecting relationships of the Ovimbundu to other African tribes is aided by a study of the Umbundu language, which is shown to be of pure Bantu structure and vocabulary (chapter VIII). The characteristic features of the Umbundu language are those which form the basic elements of Bantu speech in general. These characteristics are alliterative concord (that is, repetition of the prefix before every word in agreement with the noun); absence of grammatical gender; and a position of the genitive in which the name of the thing possessed comes before the possessor. Umbundu, though structurally assignable to the Bantu group, has its own vocabulary, whose degree of relationship to that of surrounding peoples may to some extent be judged by the vocabularies of F. and W. Jaspert (Die Völkerstämme Mittel Angolas, Frankfort, 1930, pp. 144–150). The fact that the language of the Ovimbundu has become the lingua franca of Angola, still further testifies to the thoroughness of the contacts, which from historical sources are known to have been made in the period 1500–1900.

104 The spelling of proper names leaves a wide margin for individual preference. The Umbundu language requires "M" before "B," yet custom has sanctioned the form Bailundu. Nevertheless I have retained "N" in Ngalangi despite the form Galangi on several maps. Maps show great diversity of spelling, but I have adhered throughout to Kipungo (Quipungo) and Kwanza (Quanza). Among tribal names I prefer Vakuanyama to OvaKwanyama and Vachokue to BaKioko or BaDjokue; in making the choice I have tried to imitate the sounds I heard from the natives themselves. In referring to the papers of E. Torday, who knew the southwest Congo well and spoke several Congo languages fluently, I note that he sometimes prefers to recognize the prefix as in BaMbala and BaYaka, but he also writes Badjokue and Bayaka. J. H. Weeks writes Bangala (BaNgala). C. H. L. Hahn uses the form Ovambo (OvaMbo). Ovimbundu I have preferred throughout; the accent is on the

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

penultimate syllable as is usual with Bantu words. The alternative form would be OviMbundu. Some writers hyphenate after a prefix. *Lu* is the plural prefix in the tribal names Luchazi, Luvando, Lusna and Luimba. Ocivokue, Ocimbundu and Uluchazi are singulars. The word Umbundu is used adjectivally as well as for the name of the language. 104

Observations relating to the physical appearance of the Ovimbundu (chapter IV) deal with physique, dress, tooth mutilation, hairdressing, scarification, and personal ornaments. The object of this chapter is to estimate the results of contacts so far as these affect the traits just mentioned. 121

Of great importance in an inquiry into the growth of Umbundu culture is the inferential testimony to be derived from ethnological study of surrounding tribes. This subject is considered in chapter X, "Culture Contacts," with special reference to the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa, concerning which there exists an adequate and reliable literature.

In chapter XII, "Cultural Processes," ethnological facts derived from field work and historical sources have been combined with data relating to geography, physique, and language. This has been done in such a way as to present a hypothesis of cultural growth which is consonant with direct evidence and inferential testimony.

Finally, personal acquaintance with the daily life of the Ovimbundu is made the corner stone for behavioristic study. This is intended to explain the operation of social forces and controls in welding the tribal traits whose origin and assembly have been previously discussed.

Should my colleagues of the functional school contend that my approach is too static in its historical and anatomical method, I would reply that my research does at least lay a sure ethnological foundation for those psychological and sociological studies which are today rightly regarded as essential for the adjustment of relationships between Africans and their European administrators. The correlation of all aspects of tribal life, including culture contacts, cannot be too strongly stressed. The headings chosen for chapters are adopted merely for convenience of presentation. But an endeavor has been made throughout the book, and particularly in the final chapter, to emphasize the coordination of economics, social organization, education, language, and religion.

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II. GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS

121 This chapter is intended to give an outline of the geographical conditions of Angola and to point out the way in which these have influenced the growth of Umbundu culture in all its aspects.

A presentation of geographical data is of primary importance here, and the actual relationship between the facts of geography and culture is a matter for gradual evaluation in the following chapters. The extent to which geographic determinism has entered into the cultural growth of the Ovimbundu is particularly well seen in chapter V, "Economic Life," which deals with industries, agriculture, domestic animals, fishing, and transport.

The area of Angola is a factor of importance, for the greater the extent of any country the more diversified will be the products and the cultural differences. This is particularly true if there are considerable differences in the elevation, because altitude modifies temperature and affects the distribution of rainfall.

131 Angola has an area of almost 500,000 square miles. The greatest length is a distance of about 900 miles from the river Congo in the north to the region of South West Africa. The greatest breadth is about 700 miles from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the borders of the Rhodesian plateau in the east. This range over twelve degrees of latitude, from 5° S. to 17° S., in association with differences in altitude, have produced ecological regions which are described in the following paragraphs.

132 311 167 The northern part of Angola is ecologically a part of the Congo basin, with conditions of heat and moisture giving rise to a dense tropical flora. Owing to the presence of tsetse fly, the great heat, and the lack of open grasslands, such country is unsuited for the rearing of cattle, while agriculture, including cultivation of maize, is restricted to forest clearings. Manioc, palm trees, peanuts, and sweet potatoes are the chief products serviceable to man. This region was, according to the historical evidence of chapter III, the area in which the Ovimbundu moved before they entered the Benguela Highlands of central Angola. Parts of chapters III and X ("Historical Sources" and "Culture Contacts," respectively) are devoted to an analysis of the cultural factors of the Congo area from the year A.D. 1500 to the present day.

131 The central portion of Angola is the area most important in this research because it is the home of the Ovimbundu, whose cultural

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

III. HISTORICAL SOURCES

175 The object of this chapter is the presentation of a summary of
173 literature relating to Angola from A.D. 1500 down to the present
167 day. In this literature there may be accounts of the movements of tribes which will throw some light on the origin of the Ovimbundu, and the date of their migration into the Benguela Highlands. Present-day tradition of the Ovimbundu is unanimous in declaring that the tribe came from the northeast of its present locality, but some
[101] historical justification of this belief is desirable. The word Ovimbundu ("people of the fog") may refer to the heavy morning mists of highland regions, and there is the possibility that the Ovimbundu adopted this name when they settled on the high plateau.

121 If there is historical evidence in favor of the traditional home of the Ovimbundu being the region of the north and northeast of Angola, what was the ethnological background of these areas at the time when the Ovimbundu became detached from a matrix of northern Angolan tribes? In other words, what cultural factors are the Ovimbundu likely to have brought with them into the Benguela Highlands? The ultimate origin of these factors is a point which has not been neglected (chapter XI, "Wider Culture Contacts"), but for the moment the primary concern is the historical background of the Ovimbundu, with special reference to tribal movements and cultural traits.

As part of this historical inquiry, contacts of the Portuguese and the Ovimbundu are of importance. When and where did the Portuguese come into contact with the Ovimbundu and with what results to the indigenous culture?

127 Chapters IV–IX deal exclusively with my field work among the Ovimbundu in 1929. Therefore it is pertinent to ask to what extent the ethnological observations of travelers and early explorers will corroborate the information recorded in my own notes. Will there be contradiction or confirmation of personal observations? Possibly the ethnological notes obtained from historical sources will serve, not merely to corroborate my field work, but actually to extend the area of occurrence of important cultural traits which I noted in 1929.

The literature describing Angolan history and customs is here presented in the form of a chronological bibliography, which is annotated so as to emphasize points bearing on the purpose of this historical analysis. That there should be a fragmentary presentation of data is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the literature

X. CULTURE CONTACTS

174 The foregoing chapters have presented the main outlines of the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, with a brief reference to some factors in the cultures of Angolan tribes with whom the Ovimbundu are in close contact. But hitherto no attempt has been made to analyze the cultural contacts of the Ovimbundu outside Angola.

The data recorded indicate that the tribal life of the Ovimbundu is not an independent growth in the Benguela Highlands. We have, therefore, a problem involving a detailed study of surrounding cultures. The most important of these are located in the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa, and for this reason the present chapter is divided into three sections, each of which deals with one of these areas which are all contiguous to Angola.

[121] In analyzing these surrounding cultures for comparison with the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, the social patterns as a whole are considered, and no attempt is made to construct a theory of derivations based on what might be a few fortuitous resemblances arising through convergence. Our study is aided by a knowledge of historical contacts and geographical contiguity of the areas compared. Therefore the method is not open to the objections that have been made justly against an assumption of cultural relationships between two widely separated regions, in which only a few artifacts or institutions have an alleged resemblance.

Chapters X and XI are concerned with discussing the probable cultural relationships of the Ovimbundu, and a final chapter, "Cultural Processes," indicates the way in which historical events and geographical factors have contributed to the selection and welding of traits whose aggregate now constitutes the tribal life of the Ovimbundu.

Congo Basin

An examination of the cultural traits of the Congo basin is of particular importance, because of the known historical connection of the Ovimbundu with Congo tribes, before the former entered the Benguela Highlands. Such a survey is conveniently made by examining the culture of the Congo basin from the estuary along the course of the main river, then southward along the Kasai and its tributaries into the northeast of Angola.

Despite minor differences the Congo area may be regarded as a region of considerable uniformity with regard to environment and

XI. WIDER CULTURE CONTACTS

171 121 When dealing with the immediate culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, the traits found in central Angola were considered in relation to the cultural elements of each of three areas, the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa. In this chapter attention is given to some traits that are found, not only among the Ovimbundu and adjacent peoples, but among some other African tribes remote from the present-day location of the Ovimbundu. The Graebnerian school has indeed claimed that some of these widely distributed African traits are Melanesian and Indonesian in origin, a theory which is briefly considered in the latter part of this chapter.

114 The present examination of widely distributed traits is facilitated by referring to each of a number of papers not previously mentioned. For example, E. Torday (IV) has dealt in general with religion and social organization among Bantu tribes. H. Baumann (II) has discussed hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions in Bantu Africa. G. Lindblom (I) has brought together a large body of evidence relating to the distribution of hunting devices. H. Balfour (I, II, III) has outlined the distribution of the friction drum. Hence there exist useful summaries of trait distributions with which cultural factors of the Ovimbundu can be compared.

Antiquity of Cultural Traits

171 At the outset we must recognize that the extent of distribution of a trait and its importance in the cultural pattern may be but a treacherous guide to its antiquity. The widespread use and cultivation of tobacco and maize are instances of this kind. The growth and curing of tobacco led to the adoption of this commodity as a medium of exchange which could be conveniently carried by caravans. Exchange of snuff as a form of greeting, also the passing of a communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's house, are instances of social usages which caused a rapid spread of a commodity in a short time (Laufer, Hambly, and Linton, Tobacco and Its Uses in Africa, Field Mus. Nat. Hist., Anthr. Leaflet 29, 1929).

The use of maize, one of the most important factors in the building and preservation of Umbundu culture, has a wide distribution in Africa, but its introduction is dated only from the sixteenth century. The Portuguese carried on a regular traffic in slaves between Angola and Brazil, and in all probability this resulted in the introduction of manioc, peanuts, and sweet potatoes. Possibly

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Cattle-keepers of southern Angola make butter in calabash churns which are gently swung on a pole. The Ovimbundu have taken cattle from the south and west, but have not adopted dairy products. The cattle of the Ovimbundu are valued as a standard of wealth; have great purchasing power; are used to pay taxes and fines; and, in addition to these social and economic values, are the most important sacrificial animals. This is an instance of the arbitrary selection of some traits of a culture complex, while other factors, even those of economic importance, are ignored.

Cultural losses, and failures to utilize factors which were accessible are, according to the foregoing examples, due to change of habitat from northern Angola to the Benguela Highlands; European contacts; long-established agricultural habit; and conservatism, which to some extent is a characteristic of tribes at all cultural levels.

INTEGRATION OF TRAITS

A study which is concerned with growth of culture, demands more than a historical, geographical, and mechanistic interpretation. Morphological and historical research assists in tracing origins and in forming hypotheses respecting the order in which the traits were brought together. But such inquiries are static rather than dynamic, and they are a necessary prelude to anthropological work rather than an ultimate aim.

To the methods of research already followed there should be added a psychological approach with the object of showing the way in which various elements of culture are blended and are made to function.

The following pages illustrate the way in which a field investigation is brought into contact with the welding of cultural elements, and the examples chosen call attention to principles that are responsible for the process of integration. This assimilation of cultural elements renders the study of an isolated trait impossible, as the following instances indicate. These illustrations are chosen from field notes, and are grouped in such a way as to emphasize the pivotal elements of Umbundu culture around which minor traits revolve.

Some of the examples given are intended to illustrate a relationship between language (which includes folklore, proverbs, and riddles) and nature knowledge. The latter is closely connected with hunting, food-gathering, and the selection of materials for handwork.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The part played by Portuguese influence in the formation of the culture of the Ovimbundu has previously been recognized, and in conclusion reference should be made to Portuguese and Ovimbundu relationships at the present day. 177

Native trade and military organization were at one time aided by caravan journeys resulting in the acquisition of slaves and ivory, which were traded for guns and powder. But this caravan trade touching remote parts of central and east Africa is now obsolete. Therefore a breaking down of the economic structure has occurred, but this has to some extent been counteracted by the development of agriculture, which yields large crops of maize and beans.

In the administration of law a new social consciousness has arisen. Portuguese government is of a somewhat direct kind, yet village chiefs and kings have some juridical rights. Appeal to a chief or a king was the old method of securing justice, and at present such appeal may be made by an aggrieved Ocimbundu; but should the appellant be dissatisfied he turns to the Portuguese court.

Portuguese policy aims at making the Ovimbundu a social reflection of the Portuguese themselves. European clothing and manufactures are favored, and Portuguese speech is encouraged, to the detriment of the native Umbundu.

Initiation ceremonies are forbidden, but the bush is wide and protective. To prevent these ceremonies is to take the core from the social system, which has already been weakened by recruiting of labor, so leading to disturbance of family life and village organization. Christian missions have an influence on dress, beliefs, and habits, but these effects appear to be local.

Although this report has been chiefly geographical, ethnological, historical, and analytical, no apology for the method chosen is necessary since this kind of approach is fundamental. I might, in compliance with a modern trend, have made the monograph center in persons, especially Ngonga. By making a close psychological study of his early years, his native environment, and changes in mental attitude arising from contact with Portuguese rule and American missions, an illuminating record of the result of conflicting social forces could be given. 121

In a sense, Ngonga, who speaks English, Portuguese, and Umbundu fluently, has been the focus of study, and care has been taken to recognize his personality in this report. I realize that in Angola work of an intensive psychological and sociological kind remains to be done by means of a penetrating analysis of many 115

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

121 individual careers. Inquirers should closely observe persons who are yet molded chiefly by their native environment, and these individuals should be compared with those who have left their own culture, either permanently or temporarily, to form part of a European social and economic system.

Ethnologists, educationalists, and administrators are concerned with the effects of conflicting cultures on individual attitudes and the stability of native institutions of all kinds. This type of psychological and sociological study has not been attempted in detail here, and I am not confident that research so closely concerned with administrative methods would be encouraged from a foreigner, though he might be welcomed in Angola as a collector and ethnologist.

During four centuries of foreign contacts the Ovimbundu have continued their resistance to European influence, and field records of 1929 are clear evidence of the tenacity of indigenous culture. But, unfortunately, the decline of indigenous industries, thought processes, institutions, and language has begun. Yet I venture to hope that this monograph will lay a dependable and timely foundation for future studies of behavior, for on research of that kind depends a sympathetic understanding of Negro reaction to European intrusion.

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Bengualla to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

OCCUPATIONAL RITUAL, BELIEF, AND CUSTOM AMONG THE OVIMBUNDU

By WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

[114] WHEN leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition of 1929–30 one of my chief objects was the assembling of a representative collection of the arts and handicrafts of Angola, and particularly of the Ovimbundu who occupy the Benguela highlands.

[179] The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries at least, therefore I was interested to know to what extent daily avocations had become secularized. That a close connection has existed between the sacred and the profane in Negro tribes is well known, and the influence of spiritual beliefs and magical acts in every department of economic life, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and handicrafts, has been established. But how durable is this dependence of economic life on magical acts and ancestral benediction? How soon does primitive economic life become commercialized on a European pattern?

Other observations of academic interest and practical value relate to division of labor between the sexes, specialization by age and natural aptitude; also the possibility of some callings being of an hereditary nature.

[101] My observations, which were made chiefly in the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi, are conveniently classified under the headings of food supply, handicrafts, medicine-men, and education.

FOOD SUPPLY

824 825 At the foundation of economic life is nature lore, which among the male population of the Ovimbundu is so detailed and extensive that the knowledge has given rise to a large vocabulary. The highly specialized acquaintance with trees, plants, birds, mammals, and reptiles on the part of most of the men was a surprise to me. Such information was commonly shared by males, and was in no way peculiar to the professional hunter.

I was easily able to collect a list of fifty birds which are readily distinguished by boys (who shoot them with blunt wooden arrows), and all men seemed familiar with forty species of trees, whose timbers, barks, and fruits were distinguished and named. Boys were exceptionally well acquainted with small mammals; including several kinds of rats and mice, which are trapped, boiled, and eaten. For Field Museum I made a collection of snakes and lizards; a task which again showed the native power of observation and adequacy of vocabulary. Some reptiles, whose re-

62 Edwards E-S (1955-1956)1962
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INTRODUCTION

The Ovimbundu[1] of central Angola appear under various names[2] in narratives by nineteenth and early twentieth century travellers in West Central Africa. In the present century three anthropological studies have been written about them by Childs,[3] Hambly,[4] and Hastings,[5] as well as two shorter studies by Bastos[6] and Santos Brandao,[7] and a large number of articles.[8] Despite the large amount of documentation available there existed a considerable number of gaps, especially as regards the political system and the kinship system.[9] In proposing to work among the Ovimbundu, I hoped to be able to fill in these gaps, and in particular to provide a study of what appeared to be a double-descent kinship system. I also hoped to study the reactions of an African society to Portuguese rule.

I arrived at Nova Lisboa in roughly the centre of Umbundu country in October 1955. Here, as in Lisbon, I was told that it would be very difficult to find an area where the traditional social life of the Ovimbundu as described in the literature

[1] A plural from the singular Ocimbundu. The adjective and the name of the language is Umbundu. The Ovimbundu people are entirely distinct from the Kimbundu people of northern Angola and the two languages are not mutually intelligible. However, the confusion between the two has gone so far that both Europeans and Africans speak of the Ovimbundu people and language as Kimbundu and of the true Kimbundu as Kasanjekenge.

[2] Mambari, Nano, Ovimbali, and so on.

[3] G. M. Childs, *Umbundu Kinship and Character*, Oxford, 1949.

[4] W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1934.

[5] *Ocimbundu Customs and Practices* (unpublished thesis) 1933, D. A. Hastings.

[6] Trançam Gorass sobre a Etnografia do Districto de Benguella in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1908, pp. 3–13, 44–56, 81–99, 135–40, 169–76, 197–207.

[7] Articles in *Mensário Administrativo* (Luanda) March–April, July–August 1950, and Sept.–Oct., Nov.–Dec. 1952.

[8] See Bibliography.

[9] For an examination of the ethnographic material as it then was, see Merran McCulloch, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Ethnographic Survey of Africa. International African Institute, London, 1952.

[p. xiv is blank – Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country. The census[10] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white population than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its disadvantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[11] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[12]

Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[10] Of 1950.

[11] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[12] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba–Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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Bailundo.[13] On the kinship system, however, I was even more disappointed. The information which I was given on the matrilineal groups formerly existing was much less than that provided by Hastings,[14] or by Childs,[15] and I have therefore not been able to obtain the detail for which I had hoped on the double-descent system.

Like all anthropologists I had a certain number of difficulties in making contact with the people, and to these were added the problems of finding underlying consistencies in a changing society. The Ovimbundu are not interested in genealogies and did not see why I was. My first attempts to take village censuses were regarded with great suspicion, and more than once people refused to give their names. Kinship terms and norms seemed to be and were very confused. Various matters, such as surviving pagan rituals, were concealed from me. My personal relations with the people were very happy, however, and almost everybody who came to know me was prepared to answer my questions at length.

My two great problems in the field were to obtain information on the old social structure (which I already knew in outline from the written material), and to see how the present-day society worked. The material in this thesis will be laid out in the following way. The first part will give an outline of Umbundu social structure as it was in the period 1874–1911,[16] that is, the era of the rubber trade. The second part will give a series of chapters on present day Umbundu society, which will provide the information necessary for an understanding of the mechanisms of social control. In the third part a detailed discussion of social control is made, beginning with an examination of a number of disputes. It is shown how the network of kinship and marriage ties in a neighbourhood provide local continuity and stability, while the wider units in which the Ovimbundu now participate are of European origin and control.

[13] Caconguo and Cela were tributary to Bailundo but were not incorporated into the actual kingdom (Childs, p. 168). Caconguo people say that they are not Va-Mbailundo.
[14] Hastings, Chapter VI.
[15] Hastings gives more information than Childs on the matrilineal kin group.
[16] The period of the rubber trade. Childs, pp. 209–15.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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meet other Angolan Protestants through such occasions as the Congress of Evangelical Youth, held at Malange in 1955.

While the Catholic missions are not tied to the Ovimbundu in the same way as the Protestants the number of their adherents falls sharply when the Umbundu boundary is reached. Responsiveness to missionary activity is a mark of the Ovimbundu today just as was participation in the caravan trade. Indeed, the main common possession of the Ovimbundu, the Umbundu language, is, as a literary vehicle and object of study, almost a missionary monopoly. Both missions produce a monthly magazine in Umbundu and Portuguese, and several books of a religious or educational nature have been published with Umbundu on one side and Portuguese on the other as legally required. The dictionaries and grammars are almost all of missionary authorship.

Acceptance of Christianity has also significance for Umbundu self-consciousness. The majority of Ovimbundu have come under missionary influence in varying degrees, and conversion to Christianity makes Ovimbundu feel closer to Europeans and superior to other African peoples. I have heard African priests claim that the Ovimbundu are the best people in Angola, largely on this ground, and at Lobito and Luanda tensions have been felt in the Protestant community between Ovimbundu and members of other tribes.[11]

The Ovimbundu live under economic, political, and religious systems introduced and controlled by Europeans. Yet trader, official, and missionary are all dependent on the Ovimbundu. The 'civilized' and the native live in symbiosis, and the two basic problems of this study are the nature of this symbiosis, and its relation to the social system of the native population themselves. To see this symbiosis in perspective it is necessary to describe what occupations and statuses Africans can hold.

The strict segregation of black and white found in South Africa is alien to Portuguese traditions. There is a lack of almost all forms of public segregation between white and non-white.[12]

[11] Personal information.

[12] In the racial discrimination that does exist the mulattoes generally count as whites. It is said to be difficult for a full African to obtain accommodation in a Luanda hotel, but the situation for mulattoes is quite different.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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switching to Umbundu or Portuguese for addressing an African, whereas Portuguese is the language used at the Catholic missions even between non-Portuguese.

The African Catholic priests then have approximate equality and identity of status with their white confreres within the hierarchic framework of the diocese of Nova Lisboa; the Ovimbundu pastors lack this equality and identity but instead possess greater independence and opportunities for leadership within the Umbundu Native Church, which functions as a partly autonomous body.[19] The difference in functions of the priests and pastors is related to the ultimate aims of missionary action; for the Catholic missions the establishment of a local clergy is part of the complete incorporation of Ovimbundu into the universal Church; for the Protestants the establishment of a local clergy is part of the building up of a totally independent local church.

I attempt later in this work to show what roles the missions play in social life among the Ovimbundu and in the relations between the 'civilized' and native population. Here it should be noted that it is the missions rather than commerce or the Government which have opened status-giving positions to the Ovimbundu. The clergy have higher statuses in the total Angolan society than do any other of the *assimilados*. They combine this high status *vis-à-vis* the Europeans with leadership in groupings which include the ordinary villagers, unlike the various welfare societies in which the *assimilados* associate.

So much then for the general pattern of cities, communications, and trains, of administration, missionaries, and traders. I now turn to the particular features of the neighbourhood where I lived. Bimbe is said to derive from the name of a princess (Mbimbi) who ruled as a vassal of the king of Bailundo.[20] Here at the beginning of this century Samakaka, a

[19] The missions provide supervision and specialist services including agricultural instruction, community development, education, and health. Village work and actual pastoral activity is the responsibility of the Native Church. For an account of such specialist services see M. F. Cushnahan, *Missionary Doctor in Africa*, New York, 1944 and A. Strangeways in *African Women* (June 1936).

[20] Information obtained locally from 'civilized' people. Princesses were very rare among the Ovimbundu, though Childs notes that Sambos (Sambo) had a woman ruler early in its history (p. 178).

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CHAPTER VII

KINSHIP

1. *General Aspects*

A good deal has been said about the contemporary kinship system in Chapter IV, where it was discussed from the point of view of the local organization rather than in its own right. This chapter must, therefore, to some extent, refer to information already presented in Chapters I and IV, since there are three problems to be discussed—the form of the old kinship system, the form of the present kinship system, and the reasons for the changes from one system to the other.

The following approach will be adopted: the ethnographic sources for Umbundu kinship will be examined, information will then be given on the kinship norms formerly valid, and an attempt will then be made to give a coherent sketch of the system then existing. After this, reference will be made to the actual operation of present-day kinship norms and the significance of descent and inheritance. Then factors in the transition between the two systems will be brought forward.

It has been generally accepted by commentators on the ethnographic material that the traditional Umbundu kinship system is of the type called a 'double-descent' system.[1] 'Descent' is used by British anthropologists to imply membership of a group involving rights and duties.[2] Hence, it can only be claimed that the Ovimbundu possessed such a system if there existed two sets of kin groups, and not simply some combination of matrilineal inheritance and virilocal residence at marriage.

One anthropologist, Mr. W. D. Hambly, and two missionaries

[text continues on p. 92]

[1] For other African double-descent systems see *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. Radcliffe-Brown and Forde (Oxford, 1950), pp. 79, 283–335.

[2] The word seems to have been first used in this sense by W. H. R. Rivers.

CHAPTER IX

SOCIAL CONTROL

1. *Introduction*

121 626 In this chapter I shall describe and analyse three disputes which reveal the working of social control in present-day Umbundu society. The first dispute is between an elder of the school and a government headman, the second is between a traditional headman and a villager with the intervention of a local self-styled *assimilado*[1], and the third arose from a quarrel between an irregularly installed chief and a traditional headman.

[178] The points which it is hoped will arise from the analysis of the material are the disappearance or extreme weakness of the traditional institutions of social control, the way in which the Ovimbundu appeal to the members of the 'civilized' community for decisions or support in cases, and how kinship ties affect the relations between persons involved in a dispute.

2. *Guilherme and Paulo*

578 The parties principally involved in the first dispute were Paulo (24. See List of Epalanga residents), the elder of the school at Epalanga, and his cross-cousin Guilherme (see List II, p. 55), a government headman then living in Epalanga, Francisco, a son of the former chief Mbati and wife's brother to Paulo, and Sapapula (10), the headman and reputed founder of Epalanga. The sequence of the dispute is first a quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme. Guilherme then attacks Paulo through his wife's brother Francisco. This brings about a general attack

[1] The fact that Justino was not actually an assimilado is not relevant, since he used the belief of the local people that he was.

2 [assimilado is an African governing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

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CONCLUSIONS

The phrase 'A Study of Social Control and Social Change among the Ovimbundu' implies an analysis of the working of the social maintenance mechanism in a period of social change. The concept appears almost paradoxical since it seems that effective maintenance machinery[1] would prevent social change, and rapid social change is often associated by anthropologists with a situation of individual and social demoralization and disintegration.[2] At the present time the Ovimbundu of the area where fieldwork was done have undergone very rapid social change and have a reasonably effective system of social control, which, however, differs considerably from the traditional system. To confirm these statements, I briefly summarize the material provided in previous chapters.

In the time of the rubber trade (1874–1911) there existed a number of Úmbundu kingdoms. The king, assisted and checked, as elsewhere in Africa by titled ministers, was responsible for external relations, undertook certain rituals, and provided a supreme court of appeal where trials were conducted by set rules of procedure. The real unit of law, as regards Gumba at least, seems to have been the sub-chiefdom, with its few thousand inhabitants, governed by a chief who like the king had to administer justice together with his councillors.

This body of councillors included the village headmen who were the heads of bodies of agnatic kin. They had general legal and political responsibility for the village. While the disputes arising in village relations were kept within the patrilineal kin group, the problems arising from the inheritance of movable goods and particularly from the highly important caravan trade were dealt with in the matrilineal group. Owing to the dispersed nature of this group and to its commercial preoccupations the sanctions operating within it must have differed somewhat from those found at the chief's court or village men's

[1] For this term see S. F. Nadel, *Theory of Social Structure*, London, 1957, p. 33.
[2] e.g. G. and M. Wilson, *Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge, 1945.

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gaining of wealth by means involving extensive economic co-operation among the Ovimbundu themselves, money was earned in an individual relation to a particular European whether planter or trader.

It must be recognized that the relation between economic change and the continuation or disintegration of kinship groups is a yet unsolved problem of anthropology,[6] particularly as it is seldom possible to isolate the economic pressure. I emphasize the readiness of the Ovimbundu for change, their willing acceptance of the role of clients to the whites.[7] It may be suggested that this attitude was established in the period of the trade when the Ovimbundu were ultimately dependent on the whites for trade goods and that this attitude of imitation and receptivity lies behind the disappearance of so much of the old social structure and the lack of any myth of, or even interest in, the past.[8]

I have claimed that the present system of social control is effective.[9] This may be granted empirically for the reasons already given, the absence of serious crime or prolonged conflict involving the whole community, the effective checks on the functionaries of the post, and the failure of squabbles to tear the network of kin and affinal ties. If a working social system is a proof of an integrated society, then contemporary Umbundu society qualifies for this description. This is not the only possible way of looking at it. It may be claimed that under present circumstances the Ovimbundu are no longer integrated by their tribal system but are held together by the Angolan

[6] For various comments on this problem see A. I. Richards, in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 251, M. Fortes, 'Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups', in *American Anthropologist*, Feb. 1953, M. Douglas (review of Mitchell's *The Yao Village*) in *Africa*, July 1957.

[7] Cf. the Nganguela name for the Ovimbundu, the Ovimbali, a term traditionally applied to Africans living in close contact with the whites. The Ovimbundu accept this stereotype.

[8] 'A lack of history is correlated with the amorphous character of the society.' R. Colson in Colson and Gluckman (ed.) *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, Oxford, 1951, p. 100.

[9] Other quarrels of which I heard while in Epalanga: a messenger from the mission sent to intervene in a marriage dispute was attacked; the chief of Chicunda summoned to the mission for a telling-off after beating up one of his people; a man from Cumbu refusing to go to a funeral in Cassongue of a man whose death he was thought to have caused by sorcery.